HEALTH LEARNING MATERIALS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

World Health Organization

A serious defect in the health systems of many developing countries is the almost total lack of a competent work force to deliver primary health care. So there is a vital need for basic training and continuing education of health staff.

Training a local counterpart in illustration skills

To achieve any lasting effect, training must be supported by **high quality teaching, learning and promotional materials**, developed specifically for each target group (e.g. medical assistants, nurses, technicians, community health workers). **Such materials simply do not exist in most developing countries**.

The **WHO Interregional Health Learning Materials (HLM) Programme** is operating at country level in nearly thirty developing countries, of which 14 are on the African continent. It is helping to build up a **self-sustaining national institution** in each country which can produce the required numbers of training and information materials for all categories of health staff and the community, relevant to the country's priorities for primary health care delivery.

These country projects are coordinated and supported by **intercountry HLM networks** which promote the pooling of scarce resources such as training and information materials, training facilities and staff skills.

Relevant materials - from text to television - play a vital role in building and maintaining the competence of health workers, and thus **improving the quality of health care**. In the same way, materials which educate the general public in the elements of primary health care help to promote **individual and family self-care**. These two processes together lead to an improvement in the health of populations.

READEX FICHE

The **HLM Programme** has proved itself in practice over a number of years as an institution-builder. Besides servicing nearly **thirty developing country projects**, the Programme also **coordinates five intercountry networks**. WHO's role is to help in the planning, funding and evaluation of the country HLM projects, and to coordinate the intercountry information, research and training activities of the networks. It also develops guidelines for country HLM staff on key aspects of HLM development, and promotes the exchange of information and technical expertise through a regular newsletter.

Further information on the HLM Programme may be obtained by writing to:

Health Learning Materials Programme
World Health Organization
20 Avenue Appia
CH-1211 Genève 27
Switzerland